Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any complaints against the State Trading Corporation for purchasing inferior quality of rubber;

(b) if so, the action taken in the matter;

(c) whether tyre manufacturing companies have lodged any complaints regarding inferior quality of rubber supplied to them by STC and have asked for compensation;

(d) if so, the action taken in this regard; and

(e) whether RMA IV grade rubber will now be purchased by STC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b). There has been a complaint regarding purchase of RMA-5 grade of natural rubber not conforming to the quality specifications laid down in the matter and instructions have been given to procure natural rubber under strict quality specifications.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. The STC and Rubber Board are sorting out the matter.

(e) Yes, Sir. The STC has since been instructed to purchase RMA-4 grade of natural rubber from the domestic market.

Indo-Pak Talks on Problems in Border Areas.

1552. SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI:
SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian military delegation during recent visit to Pakistan held talks with their counterparts on the problems being faced in the border areas;

(b) if so, the precise subjects considered at the talks and the outcome thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken for peace in the border areas?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR):(a) and (b). A Defence delegation visited Pakistan from the 24th to 27th September, 1991. During the talks, the situation along the Line of Control/International Border was reviewed, and measures to carry the Confidence Building process further were discussed. Agreements were also reached in principle on:

(i) Re-activation of the existing telephone lines between Baramula-Murree and Rajouri-Jhelum, for use by the concerned Sector Commanders whenever necessary.

(ii) Establishment of communication links between the Air Forces and Navies of the two countries.

(iii) Enhancing interaction and exchanges, including through participation in seminars organized by respective Institutes of Strategic Studies, exchange of sports teams etc.

(c) The Government of India constantly endeavour to maintain a dialogue with Pakistan in order to de-escalate the situation on the border. An agreement was also reached between the Indian and Pak DGMOs to prevent use of artillery, mortar and rocket fire

along the LOC w.e.f. 16th October, 1991.

[*Translation*]

Theft of Files

1553. SHRI SHIV SHARAN VERMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Raksha Mantralaya se failein gayab" appearing in Jansatta dated September 30, 1991;

(b) if so, whether the Government have conducted any investigation in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A file was reported missing in 1982 and, despite all efforts, it could not be traced. This fact was brought to the notice of the Audit. Instructions have since been issued to all concerned, re-iterating the need for ensuring the safe custody of files, and to hold a thorough enquiry to fix responsibility in case any file is reported misplaced/not traceable, without any loss of time.

Advisory Services to State Governments for Export Promotion.

1554. SHRI CHHEDI PASWAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of advisory services provided to the State Governments for export promotion during the last three years, Statewise; and

(b) when this scheme was started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.CHIDAMBARAM): (a) The Trade Development Authority helps to prepare action plans for various States. These plans identify exportable products, suggest marketing strategy, infrastructural requirements and policy adjustments.

Action Plans/Surveys have been prepared for the following States during the last three years:-

1. Andhra Pradesh
2. Assam
3. Bihar
4. North-Eastern Region
5. Orissa
6. Sikkim
7. Tamil Nadu
8. Tripura
9. Uttar Pradesh
10. West Bengal

(b) The Trade Development Authority has been providing this service since 1985.

[*English*]

Export of Pepper

1555. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of pepper exported during the last three years, yearwise;